LIFE HISTORY NOTES AND DISTRIBUTION RECORDS FOR SOME QUEENSLAND BUTTERFLIES

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Collecting in the Cairns district and in the Burdekin River basin for short intervals during the past several years has produced some new distribution records and life history information for one hesperiid and four lycaenid species.

HESPERIIDAE

Neohesperilla xiphiphora (Lower)

One male was collected in the Bogie River district approximately 96 km west of Bowen, Queensland, on 30 Nov., 1970. This species was previously unknown south of the Cairns area. The specimen collected was extremely fresh, and appeared to have bred locally.

LYCAENIDAE

Jalmenus ictinus Hewitson

A series of this species was bred from the Bogie River district approximately 96 km west of Bowen, Queensland, during November to mid December, 1970. The food plant was *Acacia bidwillii* (Corkwood Wattle). A species of meat or mound ant attended the larvae and pupae.

J. ictinus has previously been recorded from as far north as Duaringa, central Queensland (Common and Waterhouse, 1972). The above record extends its known distribution by 450 km to the NNW. During January, 1977, the closely related *J. pseudictinus* Kerr and Macqueen was found breeding abundantly on a broad-leafed *Acacia* species in the eucalypt forest west of Kuranda, Queensland. However, there was no apparent sign of *J. ictinus* in this area, even though meat ant colonies occur intermittently. Both species have been known to breed in the one area, on separate trees, in the Millmerran district, south Queensland (J. Macqueen, pers. comm.).

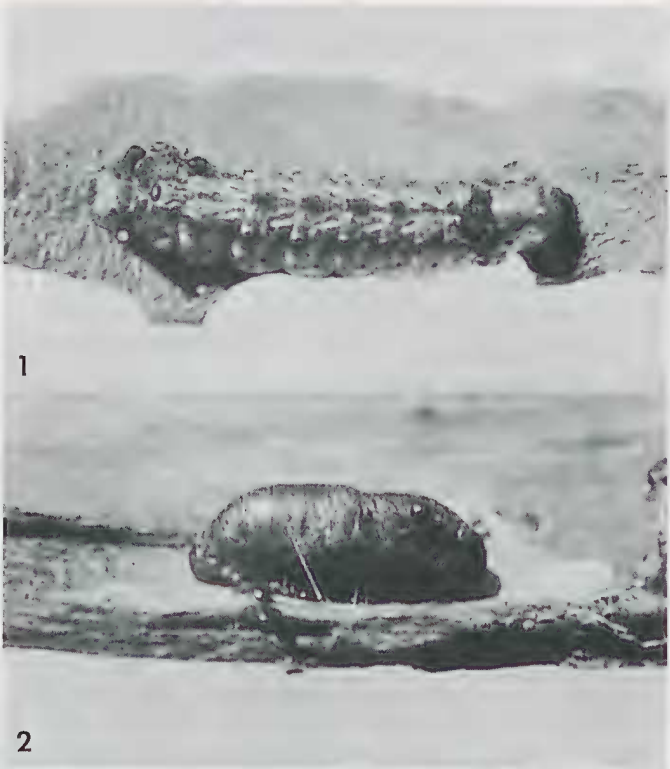
Compared with a series of *J. ictinus* bred from the Toowoomba area, the northern specimens were found to have some differences. On the upper side, the central blue areas of the fore and hind wings are paler, and the outer margins a much paler light brown; females have the terminal whitish markings on the hind wing more pronounced. Beneath they are similar to Toowoomba specimens but paler.

It is of interest to note that *Acacia bidwillii* has also been observed as a food plant of *J. daemeli* Semper in numerous localities between Rockhampton and Mackay, Queensland.

Ogyris iphis iphis Waterhouse and Lyell

(Figs 1, 2)

I first encountered the early stages of this species in January, 1977, approximately 15 km west of Kuranda, Queensland. The larvae were feeding on the mistletoe *Amyema miquellii* which was growing on a rough barked *Angophora* species prevalent in the open forest of this area. All larvae and pupae



Figs 1, 2. *Ogyris iphis iphis,* Kuranda, Queensland: (1) larva, final instar, with attendant ants *Froggatella kirbyi,* on a leaf of the food plant *Amyema miquellii*; (2) pupa, in lateral view, with cocoon on the right of a parasitic wasp that attacks the larva of this butterfly.

found were attended by the small black and tan ant, *Froggatella kirbyi.* This ant prefers to make its nest in hollow branches and borer holes, and it was in hollow branches that larger larvae and pupae were usually found. Young larvae generally stayed closer to the mistletoe clusters, even though the trees provided only small amounts of loose bark for concealment and protection.

Adult females were observed ovipositing at the base of the mistletoe clumps and on bare twigs within the clusters. Females were also observed feeding at the mistletoe blossom, while males were quite abundant on surrounding ridge tops. Numerous larvae and pupae were brought to Toowoomba and the insects emerged over a period from early February to mid April, 1977.

The larvae and pupae of *O. iphis* were very similar to those of *O. ianthis* Waterhouse from southern Queensland, which were being reared at the same time. As with larvae of *O. ianthis,* larvae of *O. iphis* will, after a period of time, refuse to feed without their attendant ants.

During two visits to Kuranda in January and May, 1978, *O. iphis* was found to be fairly widespread in the eucalypt forest west of Kuranda, and on

this occasion was found breeding on the mistletoe *Dendropthoe vitellina* growing on a bloodwood species, as well as on *Amyema miquellii* which was growing on both *Angophora* and bloodwood trees.

Dendropthoe vitellina was also found to be the food plant of *O. iphis* in the eucalypt forest approximately 16 km west of Paluma, Queensland, during May, 1978. Here larvae were found under loose bark and in cracks in the trunk near the base of the tree.

Ogyris oroetes Hewitson

A small series of this species was reared from larvae and pupae taken approximately 20 km west of Kuranda, Queensland, during July and August, 1977. The food plant was *Amyema miquellii* growing on a eucalypt. During May, 1978, adults were collected flying in the eucalypt forest at Ellis Beach, north of Cairns, Queensland. At Ellis Beach, *Amyema miquellii* is a prevalent mistletoe species. *O. oroetes* has previously been recorded from as far north as Townsville in Queensland (Common and Waterhouse, 1972). Compared with specimens from southern Queensland, males from the Cairns-Kuranda area were found to have reduced outer black margins above.

Hypochrysops cyane (Waterhouse and Lyell)

During January, 1977, approximately 15 km west of Kuranda, Queensland, several adults were collected flying around a rough-barked *Angophora* species. These same *Angophora* trees supported clusters of the mistletoe *Amyema miquellii*, on which *O. iphis* was breeding. Adults of *H. cyane* were collected flying around the *Angophora* foliage, and several were also collected feeding at the mistletoe blossom.

The "skeletonised" appearance of some of the trees suggested that they might be the food plant, though a careful search on the foliage and in hollow branches revealed no trace of the life history. However, several colonies of the ant (*Iridemyrmex* sp.) which attends *H. cyane* in southern Queensland were present.

A single male has previously been recorded from Cairns by F. P. Dodd (Peters, 1969).

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